Probe into Collapse of Mandovi Bridge in Goa

453. SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have initiated any criminal proceedings against the officials who were indicated by Rege Enquiry Commission which probed the collapse of Mandovi Bridge in Goa;

(b) if not, what are the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government are aware that this matter is now time-barred as four years have passed; and

(d) if so, whether Government would consider to amend the laws and ensure that the officials responsible therefor are brought to book?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI MANUBHAI KOTADIA): (a) and (b) No, Sir. However, departmental proceedings have been initiated against some of the officers of the State PWD.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. Even if the Rule 9 of CSS (Pension Rules, 1972 is amended removing the time limit of 4 years for institution of judicial proceedings, the same will not be applicable on these officials as the amended Rule will have prospective effect.

"International Ecological Alarm set off by Saudi Arabia about Dangers of Oil Slick"

454. SHRI DHULESHWAR MEENA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Saudi Arabia has set off an international ecological alarm as it moves to prevent the wholesale death of sea birds turtules and coastal reefs from history's biggest oil spill;

(b) whether Government have studied the impact of the oil slick advancing towards the Indian ocean, fall out of the soot released and burning of oil in the Middle East during the Gulf War;

(c) if so, the agency charged for the monitoring of the cleaning up operations in the eventuality of the oil slick reaching the Indian shores; and

(d) the steps being taken to prevent environmental degradation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) The oil spill in the Gulf, especially threat to ecology and marine life is causing international concern.

(b) Movement of oil slick is being continuously monitored by the Department of Space using Remote Sensing Satellite. Assessment made by the Government shows that the fall out of the soot and burning of oil in the Middle East during the Gulf War is not likely to significantly effect the Indian environment.

(c) and (d) The following are the spheres of responsibility for tackling any possible oil slick in the Indian waters:

(i) Central and State Pollution Control Boards	Field responstbilities in the monitoring, prevention, control and combating of pollution of water resources on land, shore and upto 5 kms in the sea.
(ii) Port Authorities	(i) Monitoring marine pollution within the limits of all the major ports irrespective of sources of the pollution. (ii) Controlling marine pollution caused by ships in any part of the sea including port waters and shoreline.
(iii) Department of Ocean Development . .	For monitoring marine pollution from land based as well as from sea based sources beyond 5 kms in the sea.
(iv) Indian Coast Guard	Responsible for prevention of oil polluttion caused by ships in any part of the sea.